

If a tick is found attached to a student, it should be removed carefully and promptly using proper technique. In a school setting, after contacting the parent/guardian for permission as appropriate based on school guidelines, tick removal should be carried out by the school nurse or other trained personnel. Once removed, the tick should be placed in a small zip lock bag or small sealed plastic vial or jar, and offered to the parent/guardian should they wish to retrieve it. Try not to crush the tick, as this may make later identification difficult.

Remove the Tick

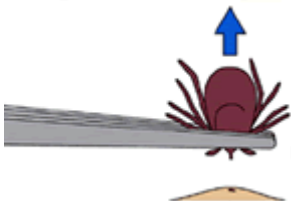
Try to remove the tick as soon as it is discovered because prompt removal can prevent Lyme disease. It can take 36 hours for a tick to transmit the bacteria that causes Lyme disease.

To safely remove ticks:

1. Use fine-tipped tweezers and firmly grasp the tick close to the skin. Avoid touching the tick with bare hands.



2. With a steady motion, pull straight up until all parts of the tick are removed. Do not twist or jerk the tick. Do not be alarmed if the tick's mouthparts remain in the skin. Once the mouthparts are removed from the rest of the tick, it can no longer transmit the Lyme disease bacteria.



DO NOT use petroleum jelly, a hot match, nail polish, or other products to remove a tick. These methods are not effective.

Thoroughly wash your hands and the bite area

After removing the tick, wash your hands with soap and water or use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer if soap and water are not available. Clean the tick bite with soap and water or use an antiseptic such as iodine scrub or rubbing alcohol.

Watch for symptoms of Lyme disease

If a tick is attached for less than 36 hours, the chance of getting Lyme disease is small. But just in case, the student's health should be monitored closely, and the parent should be on the alert for symptoms of Lyme disease. Symptoms may begin as soon as 3 days after a tick bite or as long as

30 days after, but they usually appear within 1 to 2 weeks. Parents should contact their child's healthcare provider if a rash or flu-like symptoms, such as fever, headache, joint pain, muscle aches and fatigue, develop soon after a tick bite.

Testing the tick is not recommended

The Vermont Department of Health does not test ticks for Lyme disease and does not recommend that tick testing be done. There are several reasons for this:

- You may not have been infected.

Even if a tick is infected and tests positive, it may not have transmitted the infection to you. Ticks generally need to be attached to a human for at least 36 hours in order to transmit Lyme disease.

- It might delay treatment.

Tick test results take several days and may not be available in time to make a prompt treatment decision to prevent Lyme disease.

- You may have other tick bites that you don't know about.

Most people who are infected with Lyme disease do not recall a tick bite. Therefore, if someone were to develop symptoms of Lyme disease there would be no way to know whether the infection was from a known tick bite or another unknown tick bite. For example, if a tick is tested and the result is negative, you could still have been bitten by another infected tick, not know it, and develop symptoms of Lyme disease.

- Tests performed on ticks are not always perfect.

All laboratory tests have the possibility of false positive or false negative results. Even with a negative result, people should still monitor themselves for the appearance of a rash, fever, and other flu-like symptoms. If any of these symptoms occur, you should contact your healthcare provider.

